

## Library booster group reaches out to the town

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The Duxbury Free Library serves the community in a host of ways, including book lending, DVD loaning, and serving as a community meeting place for groups and activities. But behind the scenes it takes a lot of effort to keep the building and programs running.

In addition to the staff and volunteers who work at the library, The Friends of the Library help raise money and awareness. The group was founded in 1976 by Deborah Bornheimer and today the committee consists of 12 board members. The group recently launched a Web site, duxfol.org and ran a Valentine's Day-themed contest called "What do you love about the Duxbury Free Library?"

"We are the fundraising; the awareness part of the library," said Friends President Sarah Keating.

Like many municipal departments, libraries around Massachusetts are feeling the squeeze of budget cuts. Many are in danger of losing their certification — which means



The Friends of the Library recently launched a Web site, [www.duxfol.org](http://www.duxfol.org) in order to reach a broader community.

they can't participate in cross-library lending programs and other benefits.

Certification involves a number of things, including staffing levels and spending, said Keating. Libraries are supposed to increase their budget by 2.5 percent every year (although a waiver can be obtained from the state) and they must spend a certain amount on new materials. The materials budget is a particular item targeted by the Friends.

"Without that, the library wouldn't have its certification," said Katie Brill, the Friends' children's liaison.

Brill said people around town often take the library for granted.

"I moved here three years ago and I didn't know about the library," she said.

They often fund children's programs during the summer.

They give an average of \$20,000 a year to the Library, Keating said. In 2009 alone, the Friends contributed \$14,000 for library materials such as books, CDs and DVDs; \$4,000 for the children's summer reading program; and \$2,000 for the young adult summer reading program. They also support the Bookmarks Club and give scholarships to high school students.

The Web site is the latest

venture for the group as they try to spread the message to more people.

"We're really trying to reach out electronically," Brill said.

The Web site contains information on the Friends, as well as a link back to the library.

"We just tried to make it usable and easy to get around," said Christine Donnelly, the group's Webmaster.

Library supporters can also donate to the Friends directly through the Web site. The giving levels were changed this year to allow "micro-donations." People can donate in amounts as small as 10 dollars — some were given this year as teacher gifts.

Donnelly said the hits for the Web site have been increasing monthly, and people are signing up for the Friends' Facebook and Twitter feeds.

"It's been great," she said. "I think convenience is key."

The group has been trying to get the word out about the Web site and are hoping to expand their public face by adding some merchandise like t-shirts (they already sell a bumper sticker.)

"We have a great library, we just need to work to maintain it," said Keating.